

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023

The last 12 months seem to have passed swiftly, and although we have not had any major issues to deal with as a Parish Council, it has been a year of truly historic events. We celebrated the Platinum Jubilee of Elizabeth II in June 2022, then we mourned her passing in September, and this last weekend we celebrated the coronation of King Charles III. For each of those events things were arranged in the parish, by one group or another or several groups/individuals, in order to enable us to be together and mark the passing of history. None of these were events arranged by the Parish Council, however before going into my report regarding the details of the Parish Council year I feel that this is a fitting place to pay tribute to all the parishioners who helped, in whatever way, to make those events so successful and memorable for the whole parish. Thank you!

Planning

It has been a quieter year for planning applications, just 13 this year (25 this last year). All councillors are involved in planning applications, usually the two councillors who live nearest will take a closer look (visiting if required). Applications will always be discussed at our full monthly meeting (unless the timescale for return of comments does not allow).

There have been further consultations with Bath and North East Somerset council (BaNES) and West of England regarding planning and some that cover transport as well. Thanks to Cllrs Hudson and Batchelor who have helped with these consultation responses.

Defibrillators

Thank you to Cllr Tibbs and the staff at The Carpenter's Arms for their regular checks of the 2 defibrillators in the parish, ensuring they are always "emergency ready" and reporting the details to "The Circuit".

Play Area

Thank you to Cllrs Batchelor, Hill, Pushman and Tibbs for undertaking the weekly check of the play area. This item is regularly on the agenda. We continue to pay for quarterly professional inspections and to modify and repair the equipment as recommended in these reports.

Most of the ongoing repair is done by Mr Nigel Penney, helped if required by Cllrs Hudson and Jones. The cutting and strimming of the area is contracted out.

During the year we removed the rather grubby sand and bark chippings, the areas were reseeded. It is a great shame that some residents continue to allow their dogs to exercise in the children's play area despite signs asking for dogs to be kept on leads.

The Parish Council lease the play area site from BaNES. In September 2019 a document was submitted to formally express an interest in an "Asset Transfer" of the play area land (owned by BaNES) to the ownership of the Parish Council. We still await a formal response and continue to chase this issue.

Allotments and Cemetery

The allotments continue to be well maintained, we currently have 1 vacant plot. It was great to have a category for Parish Council allotments added to the 2022 Flower Show, there are several classes in that section this year. We are trying to establish wild flowers along the hedge boundary. Thank you Cllr Hudson for keeping an eye on the site and to Mary Payne for her ongoing interest and support.

Thank you also to Cllrs Jones and Hudson for keeping the Parish Council cemetery neat and tidy.

Highways, Drainage, PROWs and Transport

The safety on the B3130 continues to be an issue. The B3130 is a relatively narrow "B" class road, it is windy and has some odd cambers, there are intermittent farms and houses all the way along the road between Belluton and Chew Magna, as well as 3 difficult junctions. Funding is still promised for a full appraisal of that road, it did not happen in 2022 but we have been told to expect it this year. Some early proposals for modification were seen but so far have not made it any further.

Many of the minor issues of potholes, sign issues and fly tipping are reported using the "Fix My Street" tab on BaNES website,

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023

this seems to work relatively well. It can be used by anyone. The clerk keeps an eye on what is reported and what is resolved.

Planned work to deal with the flooding/drainage near The Druid's Arms was done last summer, however it does not seem to have been successful. The more recent inclement weather led to a number of flood related issues. Suggestions for improvements have been sent to BaNES. Thank you to Cllrs Jones and Tibbs who have been keeping an eye on all things flood and drainage related.

Thanks once again to Shirley and Pete Edwards, along with help from Ed Field for their work as footpath officers, it is really useful having someone to keep a watchful eye on our numerous PROWs, reporting issues and making suggestions for improvements.

We tried to rally support for the "surgery bus" service, the use of the service continued to be very low and so it has now ceased. Thank you to Cllr Jones for looking at what could be done to increase usage and Cllr Hill for assessing the alternatives. Thanks to Pat Filer for his support of the service over the years. Although our service has ceased, there is a new, very flexible service now available called "WESTlink" and parishioners who have used it have reported well of it. WESTlink runs without a fixed timetable or route, and is booked 'on demand' by users through the WESTlink app or by phone, Monday to Saturday. The fare is only £2 per trip (less if you have a bus pass), full details are here <https://travelwest.info/westlink/>.

Thank you also to Cllr Hill for representing us on both Bristol Airport Consultative Committee and the Parish Council Airport Association. It is useful to be kept so well informed and to have a voice at these tables.

Some Extra Thanks

As always, an extra special thank you to the residents who, free of charge, do various jobs around the parish, picking up litter, planting bulbs, maintaining verges and benches... etc.... Thank you for caring about our lovely parish, you know who you are! We are very grateful to you.

Thank you to our ever efficient Clerk, Julie, who is the the main point of contact for everything Parish Council related. We really would fall apart if she wasn't there keeping everything rolling on smoothly. Thank you for your helpful, cheerful efficiency!

May 2023 is the formal end of one Parish Council term and the start of the next. The last 4 years have gone fast. The "outgoing" Parish Council achieved a great deal in those 4 years, even with a pandemic to contend with! This last year it has been far more "normal" without any major projects on the go.

For the last 4 years I have had the privilege of working with a fantastic team of Councillors, dedicated to helping our community. Our meetings have been a real pleasure to chair and I would like to personally thank them all for their commitment to the role as well as their help and support over the last four years. It is sad that 3 of our 7 Councillors chose not to re-stand this year, but coming onto a Parish Council or any committee should never be "for ever". So, thank you to Mr Roy Hill (cllr since 2018), Mrs Jenny Tibbs (Cllr since 2019) and Mr Nigel Pushman (Cllr since 2019) for your service to our community.

Thus a new Parish Council term starts and we have the pleasure of welcoming new councillors who I know will bring with them different skills and that are happy to share tasks, I look forward to working with them over the next 4 years.

And Finally

There is a vacancy for 1 further councillor to make the full compliment of 7, please contact Julie if you are interested.



Liz Richardson. Stanton Drew Parish Council – Outgoing Chair

Please remember that as well as our notice boards we do put information on our website: <https://stantondrewpc.co.uk>